



## **News Release**

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### **Pre-event Smallpox Vaccination Plans Approved by CDC Vaccination May Begin in February**

(SALT LAKE CITY, January 22, 2003) – The Utah Department of Health (UDOH), in conjunction with Utah's 12 local health departments, have received approval of the Smallpox Pre-event Plan from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The plan's acceptance allows Utah to proceed in delivering vaccinations in mid-February. The Pre-event Plan outlines vaccination procedures to be used throughout Utah for public health care teams and participating hospital smallpox medical care response teams. The UDOH has requested 3,000 doses of the Smallpox vaccine from the CDC. The United States currently has sufficient quantities of the vaccine to vaccinate every single person in the country in an emergency. The cost of administration for the vaccine delivery will be shouldered by Utah's health departments paid for from the CDC Bioterrorism Grant funding awarded in July 2002.

These teams will vary in size by hospital and public health department. Personnel will be vaccinated on a voluntary basis and be screened through an in-depth health history to assure that each volunteer is an appropriate candidate for the vaccine. Teams will consist of doctors, nurses, and other essential medical care hospital and public health personnel needed to provide care, case investigation and prevention. Smallpox vaccination before a confirmed smallpox case or outbreak provides response teams and other first responder personal protection from the smallpox disease. It thus enables them to rapidly take the actions needed to protect the public, which includes caring for patients with smallpox, and controlling spread of the outbreak, including establishing public vaccination clinics if needed.

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We anticipate that vaccinations in Utah will be delivered in three phases. At this time, only Phase one has been planned and approved by CDC. Each phase can only begin upon declaration by the Secretary of Health and Human Services:

- **Phase one** will include vaccination for hospital teams vital to providing care to possibly infected persons with smallpox virus (team members will be determined by the participating hospital), and public health response teams that will act to interrupt spread of the disease. Delivery may begin in mid-February where vaccinators will be vaccinated. Delivery of vaccine to health care providers may begin in March.
- **Phase two** will include the vaccination of identified first responder teams (i.e., emergency medical technicians, firefighters, law enforcement, additional administrative assistants, additional healthcare providers, etc.). Delivery may begin in late 2003.
- **Phase three** will make available vaccinations for the general public in the event they are needed. UDOH is not advising the general public to receive smallpox vaccinations at this time. Timing of delivery will be based upon a national recommendation or a credible case of smallpox identified in the United States.

Some volunteers may not be able to receive the vaccine. Those that cannot receive the vaccine include people with any of the following conditions:

- Immune suppression (in the person to be vaccinated or a close contact)
- Pregnancy (in the person to be vaccinated or a close contact)
- Eczema or atopic dermatitis (current or past) (in the person to be vaccinated or a close contact)
- Acute, chronic or exfoliative skin conditions (until improved or resolved).
- Serious allergic reaction to a prior dose of vaccine or vaccine component
- Breastfeeding
- Infants or children (under 18 years of age)
- Treatment with ophthalmic (eye) steroids (until the treatment course is completed)
- Moderate or severe acute illness (until resolved).

No naturally occurring cases of smallpox have been diagnosed in the world since 1977 in Somalia. The probability of an intentional release of the smallpox virus is thought to be low, but since the consequences of an outbreak would be great, we must be prepared. For more information, visit: [www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/index.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/index.asp),

[www.hhs.gov/smallpox/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/smallpox/index.html) or [www.health.utah.gov](http://www.health.utah.gov) or contact your state or local health department.

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